

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

Jeremiah 28:5-9

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

*Your love, O Lord, forever will I sing. (v1)*

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 10:40-42

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you direct our lives by your grace, & your words of justice & mercy reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word & serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Romans 6:12-23

<sup>15</sup>What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, <sup>18</sup>and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity & to greater & greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification. <sup>20</sup>When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup>So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been freed from sin & enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## LISTENING TO . . .

**GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit***

1. Review vv1-11 for greater context, esp. v9. For St. Paul sin & death are like the two sides of a coin- inseparable. How does this fit with *Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-19, esp. 2:17 & 3:19*?
2. The word translated “advantage” interprets the figurative word “fruit” (v21). How does this square with the following passages? *Psalm 1:1-3; Matthew 3:8, 7:16-20, 12:33; Luke 3:8-9, 6:43-45; John 15:1-18; Romans 7:4-5; Galatians 5:22-24; Ephesians 5:8-11; Colossians 1:3-10*

**EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ***

3. “It’s easier to ask forgiveness than permission” has transformed into a carte blanche for self-serving behavior (cf. vv1, 15). Name at least five times you (recently) did something wrong expecting the other party to “get over” your blatant exploitation?
4. In a certain way we can read St. Paul as saying that true freedom takes effort, but slavery (to sin, death, & the devil) just happens. He also says that true freedom is a gift of life while slavery pays out death (vv22-23). How do you see God at work keeping his players strong, smart, & healthy in everyday life?

See *Small Catechism: Creed III* available <bookofconcord.org>

**NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters***

5. Building on #4, according to vv17-18 either our wills are free to choose righteousness or enslaved to choose sinfulness. No neutral middle ground of “free agency” exists to pick what we want to be good & evil. We’re playing for one team or the other. How does this question our cultures assumptions about freedom of choice? See *John 8:31-47*
6. Freedom & happiness are found only in what’s truly good (according to God, who is goodness, truth, & beauty), & not in our choices & tastes. How can you explain that to someone else who thinks choice, taste, & desire are the greatest criteria?

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Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

06.28.20

Series: Things the Bible Doesn't Say

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

God's Goal Is Our Happiness

*Smith & Denton coined the phrase "moralistic therapeutic deism" to describe this vague, unspecific departure from Christianity*

-Notes-

**KEY VERSE:** But now that you have been freed from sin & enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. (v22)

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**-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-**

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)

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